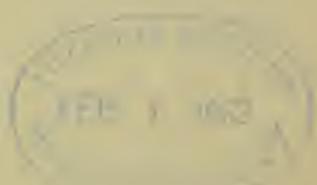


SAMUEL WILLARD

HISTORY OF THE
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OF THE RUPTURE,
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CONGREGATIONAL CLERGY AND CHURCHES
OF MASSACHUSETTS

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HISTORICAL SERMON:

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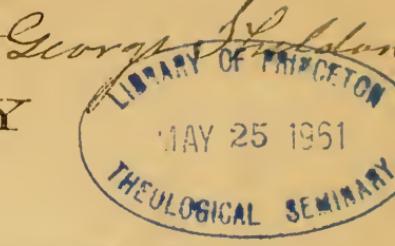
SAMUEL WILLARD.

DEERFIELD, SEPTEMBER 22, 1858.



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OF MASSACHUSETTS,

IN A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST CHURCH IN DEERFIELD, MASS.,

SEPTEMBER 22, 1857.

THE DAY PRECEDING THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

AUTHOR'S ORDINATION,

BY

✓
SAMUEL WILLARD.

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GREENFIELD :
H. D. MIRICK & CO., PRINTERS.
1858.

TO THE PUBLIC.

THE title, given to this Discourse, will not, as it is hoped, be considered inappropriate, though some, who may be thought to have had an influence, direct or indirect, on the transactions and events here related, are not even mentioned; such as Dr. Samuel Worcester, and Professors Woods and Stuart on one side, and the elder Dr. Ware, Dr. Noah Worcester, Dr. Channing, and Professor Norton on the other. As it is, the Discourse was not and could not well be delivered on such an occasion, without many abbreviations and omissions.

SERMON.

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL,—7TH.; 12TH.

Some said, He is a good man: Others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

Let no one be alarmed at the annunciation of such a text. While discoursing from it, I shall not designedly, nor, as I hope, inadvertently, breathe a word or a tone to mar the perfect harmony, which, from the depth of my soul, I wish may unite all hearts in this respected assembly while we are together, and when we part; to-day, to-morrow, and forever. But those, who may hereafter write the ecclesiastical history of Massachusetts, will probably think the fact too intimately connected with the subsequent state of the clergy and congregational churches of Massachusetts and New England generally, to be passed over in silence, that a division, very much like that mentioned in the text, did take place in relation to the man, who, fifty years ago, was ordained as the Congregational minister of Deerfield.

Some, by the course of conduct they pursued, if not in express words, said, “He is a good man;” and though, as I believe, few were so disingenuous as to say, “Nay, he deceiveth the people;” some in this

town, and many in the neighboring towns, and in other parts of New England, professed to believe, and I have no doubt with perfect sincerity, that the new minister of Deerfield was an unsafe guide in matters of religion;—that in the event he would lead his followers into dangerous, if not pernicious errors. Indeed they seem to have thought, that it was positively wrong for him to come into the valley of the Connecticut, which to that time seemed to have been sacred to the religion of the Pilgrims, and especially to abide here, after so many elders of the neighboring churches had virtually “besought him to depart out of their coasts.”

No human being knows better than I do, that the minister of Deerfield, of whom we are treating, was then, and to this time has continued to be very far from being so good a man as he ought to have been; but I shall endeavor, in words inoffensive and acceptable to every man and woman present, and with that sincerity and truthfulness becoming one, who believes that the great Head of the church, our final Judge, is now present, and hears what I say,—to give such a statement of facts and events, as will enable you and others to decide, whether that minister was entitled to Christian charity, and whether those who said, “He is a good man,” and acted accordingly, had a reasonable apology for so doing.

Some preliminary statements may serve to set the following narratives in a clearer and truer light; and enable you to judge more correctly of the expediency, or inexpediency of that schism, which commenced at Deerfield, extended far and wide, and now affects our country, more or less evidently, in all its length and breadth, where men care enough for others, or for

themselves, to apologize either for sectarian feeling, or for the neglect of all religion. I shall, therefore, hope to be excused in going a little farther back than the time of my coming to Deerfield.

At the close of my Collegiate studies at Cambridge, in June, 1803, I had fixed on the Gospel ministry, Providence permitting, as my future vocation; but went to Exeter as an assistant preceptor in the Academy in that place, where I continued till August, 1804, and employed most of my leisure time in studies, which had some bearing on my chosen profession. Among the ample funds of that Institution was one, which was sometimes applied for the benefit of those students in divinity, who had spent their all in obtaining their previous education, and needed pecuniary aid. For such aid I applied, and it was granted, on the condition that I should study with Mr. Appleton, then a minister in the neighboring town of Hampton, afterwards Dr. Appleton, President of Bowdoin College. He was a practical and very serious preacher, acceptable to the Orthodox, and I believe, to many, who differed widely from them in speculation. Rev. Dr. Sprague, in his Biographical Sketches, ranks him, as I understand, with the Orthodox, on the ground that he was always in fellowship with them, a principle of classification, to which I should not object, if applied to those only, who had pulpits at their disposal, after the schism was confirmed by custom; but I am confident in the opinion, that, when I was with him, he was neither a Calvinist, nor a Trinitarian, in any proper sense of the terms; nor, as I think, to the end of life, though he did believe in a kind of atonement, and a transmitted tendency to evil, which had some affinities with Calvinism.

Dr. Appleton's native mind and mental habits would I think, have made him a polemic of the first order, if his desire of usefulness had allowed him to pursue such a course; but whatever his speculations might be, he was reserved, and, as some would say, extremely cautious how he expressed his sentiments either in public or in private, on those questions, which have so long divided the Christian world, lest he should lose the power and opportunities for urging with the greatest success those plain doctrines of the Gospel, which bear directly on the conscience, and were in his view, chiefly "the wisdom and the power of God, unto salvation." Something of this caution he endeavored to infuse into me; and the advice and admonitions he gave me, sustained as they seemed to be by the example of the Great Teacher, had an influence on my subsequent ministry, more lasting and effectual, I think than could be ascribed to an other man, however great my love and respect for him;— however long and intimate our acquaintance.

My continuance with Mr. Appleton, was of short duration; for early in October, the same year, I had an application to go to Brunswick, as Tutor in Bowdoin College; and, with his approbation, went. There, too, I employed my leisure time in preparations for the ministry, with the advice and occasional aid of the president, Dr. McKean, one of the earliest and best fruits of Dartmouth College, in the class of 1774. His mind was capacious, and, as I believe, well stored with scientific knowledge, as well as Theological learning, which, though he had no disposition to display, he was ready to pour out in rich abundance, whenever he was drawn forth by appropriate inquiries. He could make

no pretensions to what is generally called oratory, and wished to make none ; but after a little acquaintance with the *man*, he was an impressive preacher, very impressive,—because the weighty truths he delivered came evidently through a heart deeply warmed with kindness and devout feeling.

The Orthodox claimed Dr. McKean as one of their number, and I cannot say that his Theological speculations were not with theirs ; but I can say, that with the exception of six, or possibly eight sabbaths, I attended on his preaching through the whole of a collegiate year, and was an interested hearer while I had many conversations with him on Theological subjects ; and I do not remember a single sentence in all these sermons and conversations, to which I could not readily assent, with one exception, in which he did not come so near the Orthodox faith, as I did. If, therefore, he believed in the Calvinistic doctrines, he must have considered them of little or no comparative importance in winning souls to Christ, as very far from constituting the vitality and Divine power of the Gospel.

From Brunswick I returned to Cambridge in September, 1805, for the purpose of completing my preparatory studies. There I found as a student in Divinity an old friend and acquaintance, Mr. Oliver Brown, a graduate in the class of 1804.—He was an intimate acquaintance and disciple of the Rev. Dr. Morse, of Charlestown, who was then the most prominent man among the Orthodox in and about Boston. After a few weeks, Mr. Brown told me, that he was intending to present himself to the Cambridge Association for approbation to preach, and proposed that I should go

with him for the same purpose. Premature as I think the step was, I consented to go, and Dr. Holmes, an Ortho.lox member of that Association, kindly took me in his chaise, and carried me to Lincoln, where the Association met,—introduced and recommended me to his brethren, and signed the certificate of approbation. Within a few weeks, on his invitation, I preached for him before Professor Pearson, afterwards one of the founders of the Theological School at Andover; and had his express approbation, as having preached well. About the same time, my friend Brown introduced me to Dr. Morse, who invited me to preach for him, and I complied. While I was with him, he showed me a work from the pen of my grand-father's grand-father, Samuel Willard, minister of the Old South Church, Boston, nominally Vice-President, but actually President of Harvard College, and author of a folio volume of Lectures on the Assembly's Catechism, or a part of the New England Primer.

The book he showed me was a duodecimo of 300 pages, more or less; which he spoke of, as too valuable to fall into oblivion, though rather obsolete in the style, and he proposed that I should revise it,—modernize the style,—and prepare it for re-print. Why he made the proposal to me, in preference to many others, I think he gave me no reasons. I excused myself, however, from the undertaking, notwithstanding the veneration I then had, and now have for such a progenitor.

In the summer of 1806, June or July, I think, I requested of Dr. Webber, then lately inducted into the office of President, that, if any inquiries were made of him for a candidate for the ministry, from a place where

he thought I should be acceptable, he would mention my name. He replied, that he had then a letter from Deerfield, written in behalf of the Committee by Rev. John Taylor. The most important part of that letter was the description of the candidate desired, which was something like this: "a man of moderate Orthodoxy, like the late Professor Tappan." I expressed a doubt whether I could honestly allow myself to be recommended, as I apprehended there was a difference between Dr. Tappan's speculations and mine. Dr. Webber expressed the opinion that I need not decline on that ground. It was true I knew little or nothing about the Orthodoxy of the Professor, as the sermons I had heard from him were on subjects, on which Christians generally agreed; and in the Lectures, he had delivered in college on Theological questions, he scarcely intimated his own opinions, but gave impartial views of the best arguments on opposite sides, and left his pupils to weigh and balance the evidence for themselves. Dr. Webber had long been associated with him, and had had opportunities for knowing his real sentiments, which I never had, and therefore, I was going to say therefore, I consented, but check myself; for after fifty years I am not certain that these things passed distinctly through my mind; but, believing Mr. Webber to be an honest man, as I now believe, and confiding in his better judgment, whatever the ground of that confidence, I consented that he should mention my name, perhaps recommend me. How much or little of a recommendation he wrote, if I ever knew, as probably I did not, I have forgotten.

From Deerfield, however, I heard nothing more for several months, but about the last of November, I came

to preach for several weeks in Montague, and during my engagement there, I visited an old acquaintance in this town, who informed me that the people here had had as a candidate, Mr. Samuel P. Williams, an Orthodox man, afterwards settled in the county of Essex, to whom they had given a call, but had not then received an answer.

Soon after my return to Cambridge, I met with one of the Committee from Deerfield, Mr. Asahel Wright, Jr., from whom I learned that Mr. Williams had given a negative answer, and I was invited to go and supply the pulpit. The fact, that the people had so lately united in the choice of an Orthodox man, as their spiritual guide, was not very encouraging to a disciple of the cautious Dr. Appleton; and fearing that I could not "frame to pronounce" the Shibboleth, that might be required of me, I declined the invitation, and recommended, as a man likely to give satisfaction, my Orthodox friend, Mr. Brown, who had before shown the candor of recommending me in a place where he had been preaching, when he was going to supply another pulpit. Mr. Wright, however, did not follow my advice, but returned without engaging a candidate.

For reasons, which I need not state, I soon after went to Andover, as a temporary abode. There I found Father French, the Orthodox minister of the South Parish, rather unwell and was requested or invited to preach for him, which I did, and so much to his satisfaction, that, although not so ill but that he might have done his own preaching, he repeated the request, and, I think I supplied his pulpit not less than three whole days, with the constant attendance of several men, who were then laying the plan of the Theo-

logical Institution ; and as far as I can remember, I never heard that any one of them was dissatisfied with Mr. French for supplying his pulpit in that way.

Early in March I received a letter, written in behalf of the Committee of this town, repeating the invitation that I would come and supply the pulpit. This was an apparent indication of a desire, somewhat extensive among the people, to hear me ; and it might well be an encouragement to recollect the uniform satisfaction, I seemed to have given to the leaders of the Orthodox, wherever I had been.

From these considerations, perhaps, and others which I cannot name, I was induced to ascertain by experiment, whether Deerfield was a place where “the fruits of righteousness,” without any mixture of doubtful speculation, could “be sown in peace” by one, who was disposed to “make peace,” and to preserve peace. Accordingly I prepared my answer, and put it into the office ; but the very mail which carried my letter on toward Deerfield, brought me one from a friend in Brunswick, written in behalf of the people of Topsham, requesting me to go and preach to them. I remember well the regret I felt that that letter did not come a day sooner, or that my letter had not been delayed a day longer ; conscious that in that case I should have given a negative to the Committee of Deerfield on the simple ground that I thought myself less likely to give satisfaction in the valley of the Connecticut, than in that of the Androscoggin. But my answer had gone and I must go.

In review of the various facts I have mentioned, I would ask my friends, whether a Puritanic Faith, and something less than that, would not discover the hand of

God in this train of circumstances and events; whether I have not some ground to say, "neither came I of myself, but the Father sent me." I came in opposition to my predisposition; I could almost say predetermination. I must come. My will was overruled by a higher will. Had I given a negative to that second request, it would not probably have been again repeated. Most certainly I should not have offered my services,—and there is little reason to suppose I should ever have troubled the waters of the Connecticut.

But however clear the indications of a Divine purpose, which brought me hither, these indications extend no farther. It did not yet appear how long I was to continue here;—whether it was for life, or only a few weeks was yet undecided, or at least unknown to man.

My first sermon was preached on the 15th of March on the subject of Self-Examination, from the short text, "Is it I," Matthew, 20: 22; and I believe it made a favorable impression, which was confirmed and increased by the sermons of the next two Sabbaths. During the week preceding the first Sabbath in April, there were two snow-storms, amounting to about two feet of snow, as it was said, over most of New England, and as the weather was pleasant, and the sleighing very good on that Sabbath, there were, it was thought, about sixty sleighs at our church from all parts of the town; many of them from the distance of four or five miles. Many of those, who came in them, may have been actuated by other motives, than those of worshiping God, and hearing the candidate; but as there was an opportunity, so there appeared to be a disposition to hear. Things went on maturing for several weeks, till, on the eighteenth day of May, the church, according to the

established custom of those times, took the lead in giving me a call to settle here in the ministry. The number of male members was about forty, there was only one negative vote, and twenty-two in the affirmative ; and one or two members, who did not take an active part. In the town-meeting, which was held June fourth, for the purpose of deciding the question of concurrence with the church in my call, I think there were not more than two opposing votes within three miles of the house. Soon after the meeting of the town, I left Deerfield for the purpose of consulting my friends, on the expediency of accepting the proposals I had received, and among these Mr. Appleton, who was perhaps better acquainted with the state of things in this valley than I was, having studied his profession with Dr. Lathrop of West Springfield. We were both aware that the choice of the people, however distinctly expressed, did not ensure the ordination of their candidate, though at that time there had been little or no separation between the Calvinistic clergy and those who differed widely from them in Theological speculation ; and there had been recent instances of both uniting in the ordination of men, who were known, or supposed to be as far from Orthodoxy as myself. It was, however, the established custom to call in the neighboring ministers and churches, whatever their sentiments, in sufficient numbers to make the majority of an ordaining council. Our neighbors were Orthodox ; perhaps we may say of the strictest sect ; and though I might have claimed the right of nominating one-half of the council, it would have been of little avail to me ; for if the other half had not been satisfied, though some one of them might have yielded to the wishes of the people, it would not

have satisfied my wishes ; for the majority of the council would have stood so high in the opinion of many, that it would, in all probability, have made such a division among those who had been in my favor, as would have destroyed all my hopes of usefulness. I wished to be ordained by the harmonious consent of the council, or not at all ; and, therefore, I nominated myself two or three Orthodox persons, in preference to those who were called liberal. I chose to put myself entirely into their hands, and trust the event of my ordination to their candor and christian prudence.

The day first appointed for my ordination was the twelfth of August ; and before that time I had preached by way of exchange in five neighboring pulpits, belonging to the Orthodox Clergy, who had been named as members of the council : Dr. Newton's in Greenfield, Mr. Packard's in Shelburne, Mr. Emerson's in Conway, Mr. Wells in Whately, and Dr. Lyman's in Hatfield. In all these places, as far as I ever knew, I gave general, if not universal satisfaction ; notwithstanding the wide-spread jealousy of Harvard College, which was likely to excite a suspicion against myself. At Hatfield, in the interval between the first and second services, one of the Deacons, son-in-law of Dr. Lyman, applied to me for a third service, to be announced at the close of the second ; and I believe the two latter were as acceptable as the first.

Agreeably to the custom of those days, the Council assembled on the day preceding that appointed for the ordination, and employed several hours in preparing the way for the public services. On the eleventh, the following Clergymen appeared, agreeably to the invitations given : Rev. Dr. Newton, — who was chosen

Moderator ; Rev. John Emerson, Rev. R. Wells, Joseph Lyman, D. D., David Parsons, D. D., John Taylor, Jesse Appleton, of Hampton, N. H., who was to have preached, and Festus Foster of Petersham. Dr. Buckminster was invited but did not attend. Mr. Theophilus Packard, of Shelburne, was chosen Scribe. After the usual preliminaries, the Council proceeded to examine the Pastor elect. To save them from the perplexities likely to arise from deep inquiries into the mysteries of Theology, I had prepared a written Profession in which I endeavored to come as near the Orthodox standard, as I conscientiously could, and not a whit nearer ; hoping that it would so far satisfy them, as to prevent such a scrutiny into the lights and shades, the doubts and convictions of my understanding, as might involve both me and themselves in trouble.

Dr. Lyman, however, opposed the admission of this paper till after there had been a catechetical examination ; and a majority of the Council yielded to his objection, if they did not support it.

It was understood in those days, that every member of this Council, both Clergy and Laity, had a right to propose any question he pleased, which was not impertinent to the occasion. But it was usual to proceed in the order of seniority, so far as the Clergy were concerned. Dr. Lyman was the fourth in this order ; and the precision and emphasis, with which his first question was put, showed a determination to know, and let others know the precise state of my immature mind in respect to some of the deep mysteries of Theology, and particularly the absolute Deity of Christ, or his equality with the Father. In saying this, I would, by no means throw any reproach on that venerable man.

I choose to consider him as actuated by an ardent and holy zeal for Christ and his cause, though I think it was an erroneous zeal. The examination on the first day continued, as I have always supposed, about two hours ; and for some reason I was called in on the second day, and examined, as I thought, about one hour. The rest of the session, till about three o'clock on the twelfth, was employed, I believe, in debating and deciding the question, whether they should proceed to ordination, and in making out their result. After this, they proceeded to the church, read their result and closed with a prayer.

Though disappointed in the course the Council had taken, I never, so far as I remember, cast any blame on them for simply withholding from me the imposition of their hands. I did not then,— nor do I now, believe, that an ordaining Council is a mere instrument to be used by others for the performance of a holy work. I can easily conceive of a case in which I should do as they did ; with this exception, that I should not lay so great stress on Theological opinions.

To show that I had no hard feelings on the subject, I was careful to call next morning on Dr. Lyman, who was unquestionably the leading member of the Council, and manifest to him the state of my feelings ; and I believe we parted with mutual respect and kind sentiments, as men, if not as Christians.

After the result was known, I think I had no other expectation, not even a single thought of anything else than leaving Deerfield and the pleasant valley without delay ; and was surprised, when I presently learned that the church, at an adjourned meeting, had voted to request the town's Committee to engage

me for a farther supply of the pulpit, and had requested me to meet them at another adjournment, and explain to them my views in respect to the doctrines in which the Council had thought me deficient. The town's Committee complied with their request, and I met the church as desired, at the house of the Moderator, the venerable Deacon Arms, explained my views, and submitted myself to any questions any member was disposed to ask, there being thirty-nine present.

The following question was then put by the Moderator: "Is the Profession of Faith, made by Mr. Willard, satisfactory?" and there appeared twenty-eight in the affirmative, eight in the negative, and two or three that did not vote. A second question was then put, viz: "Do the church continue their invitation to Mr. Samuel Willard to settle with them in the work of the Gospel ministry?" which passed in the affirmative,— 27 to 12.

Application was of course made to the town for their concurrence in the second vote, and, at a meeting remarkably full, I believe, the question was decided by yeas and nays; and, I think I may trust my memory in saying, that there were not more than one or two nays on the north side of a line drawn through the town east and west, two miles south of the meeting-house; while there were many yeas on the south of that line. To this fact I shall have occasion to recur hereafter.

Among the most decided adherents, were men of unquestionable Orthodoxy; such as that eminent saint, Deacon Asahel Wright, and Deacon Arms, who, I believe, never closed a prayer without a strong Trinitarian doxology. In this situation, what was I to do?

The proceedings of the church and town gave me a new question of vast moment to consider and decide ; and here, perhaps, the hand of God may be distinctly seen, especially when these things are connected with those in the preceding narrative. I had been disposed to quit the ground immediately ; or, if I remained in this valley, to go to Springfield, whither I had been invited immediately after the result of the Council was known, by the committee, or one authorized by them ; but a large majority of the people here were claiming their rights, as Congregationalists and as Christians, to have the minister of their choice, and they had manifested a strong attachment to me.

In collecting a second Council, it was determined to send for a larger number, than there were in the first Council, and to include among them a good proportion of those, who were Orthodox in speculation, but liberal in their feelings. Accordingly we sent for Dr. Osgood of Medford, Dr. Holmes of Cambridge, Mr. Chaplin of Groton, and Mr. Puffer of Berlin, who were regarded as Orthodox ; and besides them, we applied to Dr. Barnard of Salem, Mr. Abbott of Beverly, Dr. Reed of West Bridgewater, Mr. Stearns of Lincoln, Dr. Kendall of Weston, Mr. Ripley of Concord, Mr. Allen of Bolton, Mr. Thayer of Lancaster, and Mr. Kilburn of Wendell. That everything might be fairly conducted, we sent all the letters by an *Express*, and with them copies of my Profession of Faith, and the result of the former Council, which were read in the several churches, and in some instances before the whole Congregation.

The time appointed for the meeting of the second Council was the twenty-second of September, that for the ordination being the twenty-third.

For various reasons, several of the clergy invited failed of coming, and among others, three of the Orthodox members. Dr. Osgood seldom, or never went so far from home, and on that ground excused himself; but wrote a letter, which probably had more effect in confirming those, who might otherwise have wavered, than his presence would have had. Dr. Holmes offered as his only excuse for not coming, the dangerous sickness of his wife, while he said that his heart would be with us, and that he had read and entirely approved the letter of Dr. Osgood. Mr. Chaplin declined coming from the same scruples, which had restrained the first Council from performing the work of ordination. Mr. Pufier was present and made one of the prayers.

In regard to the result of the first Council, there seems to have been no general understanding at first, even among the Orthodox, how it was to be construed; whether as a mere negative proposition, that that Council could not perform the service, or whether it was to be considered as a prohibition laid upon all others; as a finality to the people of Deerfield and the Pastor elect. Even the venerable Mr. Williams of Northampton, the minister of the largest congregation, perhaps, in Massachusetts, seems to have known nothing of what had been determined by one, two, or three leading minds. This will appear from the fact I am about to state.

Before the time first appointed for my ordination, I proposed an exchange with him, to which he readily consented; but for some reasons, deferred it till after

my ordination. The next week after the sitting of the first Council, I visited a friend in Northampton, called upon Mr. Williams, and talked freely of the difficulties, which had arisen between me and that Council. As my visit was extended through two or three days, I called again upon him, and was told that he had engaged an exchange, in which I was to be included.

Rev. Mr. Keep, who was settled somewhere in what is now the western part of Hampden county, was going up the river, and was to supply the people of Deerfield, Mr. Williams was to supply Mr. Keep, and I was to preach in Northampton. But within a few hours I was informed by Mr. Williams, that Mr. Keep had sent back word from Hatfield, that it would not be convenient for him to stop at Deerfield. I suppose the same reason rendered it inconvenient for Mr. Williams to make a direct exchange. How Mr. Keep happened to learn this inconvenience at Hatfield, I leave to your conjecture.

Lest any one should think I have forgotten the pledge given in the introduction of this discourse, I would here say, that my design renders it necessary to utter a few plain truths in connection with some venerable names; but I would guard most scrupulously against the slightest reproach upon those names.

Dr. Lyman, Father Emerson, and Mr. Packard, were, I believe, among the most active, or decided among my opponents; and yet I can say with the deepest sincerity, God grant that in the great day, I may be found as good a Christian, as I believe them to have been. If with all the unworthiness, of which I am conscious, I am received into those regions, which are emphatically the Holy of Holies, with my present feelings, with the feelings, which, with a few brief intervals, through the

lapse of fifty years, I have always had, I shall be disappointed if I do not meet them there, or hear of them in some province of the Blessed Kingdom. With such feelings, my own cup of bliss would not otherwise be full.

But I am charged with facts important, as I think, to posterity ; things, which I have seen, or heard, and known, concerning various measures, which originated and consummated that division of Congregational Christians, which remains to the present time. I may not tell the whole truth. Something unknown to me, or something which I have not time to relate, may be necessary to set my statements in their true light. and I hope that, if my opponents are in possession of such facts, they will bring them out, for I wish posterity to know the exact truth, that they may know what to imitate, and what to avoid. Probably, too, I may give more color to some things, than an impartial mind would give.

In a written controversy between the ministers of Hatfield and Deerfield, which occurred in 1814, Dr. Lyman speaks of the result of the first Council, as “ a judicial decision;” and you may perhaps, see reason for believing that, from the first, some of the members of that Council intended to make it so ; intended to make the minister and people of Deerfield see and feel that it was “ an evil thing and bitter,” that they had paid no more regard to that result. Of this two venerable friends of mine seem to have been aware, Rev. Dr. Newton of Greenfield, Rev. Mr. Kilburn of Wendell. Dr. N. who as already stated, was Moderator of the first Council, together with his delegate, Hon. J. Leavitt, were in the minority, who would have proceeded to ordination, and the former was present at the second Council, and at-

tended the public services. Afterward, when others were tendering their congratulations, the good Doctor gave me his hand, saying, "I know not whether to congratulate you or not, but I wish you well," and Mr. Kilburn, who had given me the right hand of fellowship, said before he left me, he had never before attended an ordination, when both minister and people had sacrificed so much as we had done.

The greater part of the clergymen, comprising the first Council, belonged to one or the other of two neighboring Associations; one in the north-western part of what was then the County of Hampshire, now Franklin, containing ten or twelve members; and the other in and about Northampton, numbering, I think, more than twenty. Within a few weeks after my ordination, questions were asked and answered in both those Associations, which, though they had not the form, were intended to have the effect of permanent laws, binding all the members not to exchange with the minister of Deerfield. I once had certified copies of both these votes; but they are not now at hand, and I cannot give the precise forms. One of them was something like this, and the other not very different:—"Is it our duty to admit into our pulpits a man, who denies the Divinity of Christ?" Answered in the negative. My name, indeed, was not mentioned; but it had gone abroad near and far, that the new minister of Deerfield did deny the Divinity of Christ. I suppose that no one would for a moment doubt, that the vote was aimed at me, and through me at my church and people. Dr. Newton said once and again, that he had no personal objection to exchange with me, but in his advanced age he was unwilling to contend with his brethren;

from which we may infer that he considered himself bound to non-intercourse of that kind by the vote of the Associations. If farther evidence of the intentions were needed, it would be found in the fact, that Rev. Dan Huntington, who afterwards joined the Northampton Association, and exchanged labors with me in 1819, was called to an account for a violation of one of their standing rules.

If any member of either Association, standing by himself, and acting for himself and for his people, had declined exchanging pulpits with me, I should not have blamed him. Every minister, I think, must judge whether the cause of religion will, or will not be promoted, in existing circumstances, by exchanging with this or that particular man ; and he must yield to the dictates of his own conscience, and his foresight of good or evil. A question, however, arises, which I have no disposition to decide ; whether it is right for any man, or body of men, to interpose in such a manner between the individual minister and the great Head of the Church, from whom he received his commission and his directions,—who says to him and all others, “Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.”

It seems not to have been sufficient in the view of those, who at that time led in our ecclesiastical affairs, to exclude the minister of Deerfield from their pulpit ; but he must be represented as so unholy, or unchristian, that they could not sit in Council with him, for the purpose of ordination, although he took no other part than that of talking, or voting. This was manifested a few weeks after his settlement, at the ordination of Rev. Aaron Gates, at Montague. The churches of Deerfield and Sunderland, with their ministers, were among

those, who were requested to form the Council. As I think appeared in full evidence, the church of Sunderland voted to comply without any reserve ; but, on the sabbath preceding the ordination, Dr. Lyman went to preach in Montague, and passed through Sunderland, where Dr. Parsons preached on the same day, by way of exchange ; and it was a remarkable fact, that on that day the church in Sunderland passed a vote, directing their minister and delegate, not to sit in the Council, if the minister and delegate from Deerfield were there.

This latter vote was presented by the Pastor of that church, together with a speech of some length on the subject, explaining the difficulties he felt, in such a communion with the minister of Deerfield. After hearing his remarks, the venerable Dr. Lathrop, Moderator, said to him, "Mr. Taylor, the Council have no power to compel you to sit with Mr. Willard." The minister and delegate withdrew from the Council, though not from the room ; and the Council went on harmoniously, and found no difficulty in assigning me the introductory prayer.

Something of the same kind, but on a more extended scale, occurred in Greenfield in the autumn of 1813. The Council, convened for the ordination of Mr. G. S. Olds, consisted of Orthodox clergymen, together with the ministers of Bernardston and Deerfield. After the organization of the Council, the oldest member rose, and stated that he was instructed by his church not to sit in the Council, if the minister and delegate from Deerfield "insisted on their right of session." Another arose, and made a similar statement ; and others, to the number of five. How it came into the minds of so many churches all at once, to give such extraordinary

instructions to their Pastors, may excite the curiosity of some; but whatever may be the conjectures of others, I have no sufficient warrant for denying that it was the suggestion of that One Spirit, from whom all *good* influences proceed.

These statements were followed by speeches from most, if not all of those clergymen, and some of their delegates; to which I replied, severally and collectively, so far as they appeared to require an answer. The object of the gentlemen seemed to be one of these three things:— to draw from me such a profession of my present views of the mysterious doctrines of Theology, as would remove their scruples in regard to their sitting with me; to induce me to withdraw from the Council; or, thirdly, to render me responsible, in the view of the good people of Greenfield, and of the world, for defeating the ordination. As my title to a seat rested on the same ground with that of every other member, I could not for a moment allow my right to a seat to depend on a catechetical examination from those whom my Savior had commanded me to regard as brethren; as equals, and not as masters; all subject alike to himself. The alternative, therefore, was, Shall I resign my seat, and thus virtually acknowledge the right of my brethren to overrule the doings of the Church, to whose invitation alone we all owe our place in the Council? or, shall I disappoint the good people of Greenfield, and put them to the trouble and cost of another Council? At the close of a long evening, the Council adjourned to an early hour the next morning, and I retired to rest, but not to sleep. That trying alternative occupied my thoughts the whole night; and my conclusion was, however painful to my

heart, that I should not withdraw, unless it were expressly desired by the Church, that gave me the commission, which, as I apprehended, they could not withdraw, unless forfeited by some fault of mine. Some hours in the morning were spent in the same manner, with those of the preceding evening. Other discussions, growing out of the occasion, employed the Council till nearly sunset, when they dispersed without having put a finger to the work, for which they were called.

The doings of this Council led indirectly to a written controversy between the ministers of Hatfield and Shelburne on one side, and Mr. Willard on the other. With my consent, but without any action on my part, some of my friends in Greenfield published certain papers, relative to the first Council in Deerfield, and the first in Greenfield, in a pamphlet, which they entitled *Documents*. This drew out another pamphlet entitled the *Counterpart, &c.*, in two parts; one relating to the Council in Deerfield, and the other to that in Greenfield; which, though they bore no names, were understood to be from the pens of Dr. Lyman and Dr. Packard. To those I replied in a pamphlet, entitled *Comments, &c.* Dr. Lyman followed in another pamphlet called *Strictures on the Preceding*. I closed with one entitled *Remarks, &c.*

These five pamphlets, amounting in all, perhaps, to 170 pages, related almost entirely to the doings of those two Councils, and the principles, which ought to regulate ministerial fellowship. It is perhaps forty years, since I read a single sentence of them, and many years since I lent my last copies, and have never recovered them; but from my recollection, I think there were

on my part a few instances of irony expressed in single words, or phrases, which might better have been suppressed.

The proceedings of the neighboring clergy, thus far related, had an immediate bearing on the minister and people of Deerfield ; and, as I think there is no reason to doubt, were intended to produce such an effect on one or the other, as would be followed by a dissolution of their connection. But, as you may presently see reason to believe, there was an ulterior object in view ; that of preventing any farther spread of heresy among the churches of this region. This, I think, will be apparent from other measures simultaneously or subsequently taken.

About the year 1811, I should think, but have not the means of ascertaining precisely, there was an attempt in Dr. Packard's Association, as I shall call it, in order to save words, to form a Confederation of churches, which should control the action and independence of individual churches, particularly in the choice and settlement of their ministers. I have no copy of the plan proposed ; but it was similar to the Associations in Connecticut. The proposition, however, met with so little favor with the people, that it was presently abandoned.

About the year 1817, as I think, the plan was revived in a gigantic Association, of which Dr. Lyman was a member. Application was made to the several churches, to send delegates with their pastors, to a Convention, for the purpose of forming a platform, or Constitution, for the proposed Association. That Convention met, and did the work for which they came together. I once had a copy of that Constitution, and examined it with minute attention, and have

a distinct recollection of the substance, though not of the precise language of three articles, which will enable you to judge of the whole. First, it required that the Association should either constitute or choose a decided majority of all ordaining Councils ; and I think, of all Councils, called to settle difficulties between Ministers and their People. Secondly, it was expressly said, that the Association should have power, with little or no qualification, to amend their Constitution, whenever they thought it would be conducive to the order and edification of the churches ; and, thirdly, that the churches should bind themselves, to send delegates to the annual meeting, if not to others ; thus reserving to themselves no liberty to withdraw from the Association, when they had once joined. If these things did not constitute an entire surrender of ecclesiastical and private independence, I can hardly conceive what would.

The platform was submitted to the several churches. In that of Dr. Lyman, the author of the proposed measure, it was said to have been urged in several successive meetings, but could not be carried. In some few churches it was accepted ; but the failure was so general and so great, that the authors of it exchanged the plan for another more promising, and as the event has proved, more effectual, in regard to the proximate design, that of producing a thorough division between the Orthodox clergy and those, who have since been called Unitarians.

After other measures had failed of securing the ascendancy of Orthodoxy for years and ages to come, it seems to have been determined by some defenders of that faith, to attempt by a virtual, though not a formal

league, with kindred spirits in other parts of Massachusetts, to effect the same purpose by other means, viz : by persuading or compelling all, who would themselves be regarded as Orthodox, to withdraw ministerial fellowship from every one, who did not acknowledge the same faith. This was, indeed, an arduous undertaking, and could not be carried into effect without a large amount of energy and perseverance, and I think I may add, stern resolution ; for, in the first place, some of the most respectable men in the Orthodox community were decidedly opposed to such a measure ; among whom were Rev. Mr. Allen of Pittsfield, Dr. Lathrop of West Springfield, Dr. Emmons of Franklin, Dr. Osgood of Medford, and Dr. Parish of Byfield. In the second place, there were many among the Orthodox clergy, whose warm hearts, ministerial connections, and parochial situations made them deaf to persuasion in this matter, even if their consciences did not revolt against it ; and between these there were some few, like Dr. Holmes, of Cambridge, who would say but little against the proposed measure, but still go on in the catholic way, which was dear to his heart. This may be illustrated by an anecdote of that good man, whose name is dear to my memory. Soon after my ordination I visited Cambridge, and called on Dr. Holmes near the close of the week. He asked me whether I was engaged for the next Sabbath, and being answered in the negative, said that he was engaged on an exchange, but, as he thought it would be an advantage to me to preach in his pulpit, he would get released from that exchange, if I would supply him. This was done, though it cost him no little trouble to obtain that release. When we came out of church he gave

me his hand, saying he wished me to regard that as a right hand of fellowship from him.

The plan of moral suasion, which was the first resort, went on, I believe, in different parts of the state for several years, and in some parts with little effect ; and it was thought necessary by the leaders to use the strong arm of coercion, or at least to threaten those, who could not be persuaded by more ingenuous arguments.

These compulsive measures had the intended effect. The lines were soon drawn, thoroughly drawn, between the two great classes of the Congregational Clergy ; but, as should have been foreseen, the division did not stop there. The churches and religious societies were almost everywhere rent assunder. Nor was that the end ; for, as a necessary consequence, many Christian families were divided, husband and wife, parent and child, brother and brother, sister and sister. Where there was no positive alienation, there was often if not generally, an abatement of that mutual love and confidence, the cultivation of which was probably one of the principal reasons, for which Divine Wisdom ordained those domestic relations.

I condemn not those, who took the lead in such a revolution ; but I would ask the question, whether the cause of vital religion, the cause of true discipleship has apparently gained by this contest about the deep mysteries of Theology.

To enable the younger part of the community to understand how great has been the revolution, that has taken place in our Religious Societies within the last half century, they may need to be informed how things

stood at the commencement of that period ; and I think it may be said that, so long ago, there were comparatively few towns in the interior of Massachusetts, where there was more than one religious society, with a few Baptists or Methodists, perhaps, who had no permanent ministers or organization. Even Northampton with three thousand inhabitants, more or less, was an instance ; and I believe what is now called Springfield. Now we hardly find a town of a thousand inhabitants, where there are not three or four societies, though most of them struggle hard to support an ecclesiastical existence.

I might have brought more distinctly into view the effects of coercion on the reluctant clergymen, on whom it was exerted. Many of them in the central and eastern parts of the state depended much, if not chiefly, on those who were of different sentiments from themselves, for hearers and for support; who continued to hear and support from personal regard to their ministers ; while *they* continued to give them an opportunity for hearing men of their own views by way of exchange. When this privilege, or right as they would regard it, was denied them, there was a shock, which was deeply felt by minister, as well as people, and a fountain of bitter waters was opened in almost every society, which continues to flow more or less, to the present time. A remarkable instance occurred in the first society of Dedham ; and another in Groton. The division in Dedham led to a litigation about the church plate, which drew forth the remarkable decision of Chief Justice Parsons, and his Associates on the Bench. Of that decision I am not called to give any opinion ; and if I were, I must have another time and place for

it ; but, as that decision is often made the instrument of stirring up bitter feelings in this community, I would ask those, who avail themselves of it, to trace it to its origin.

In view of these things, I would kindly submit the question to those, who have allowed themselves to be coërced into these divisions, how they reconcile this submission with the injunction of the Savior, Matthew 23 : " Call no man Master, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren ;" or, with those, which require them to pay an undivided allegiance to Him, though at the expense of any evils man can inflict. On the other hand, I would ask those, who assume such dominion over the feelings and consciences of their brethren, how it can be reconciled with the prohibition, " Neither be ye called Masters," and many other passages of like import. Again, I would ask, whether there be any reliable evidence that the schism, we have been considering, has been conducive to vital piety, while it has been apparently at variance with the test of discipleship, prescribed by our divine Master, Matthew vii. 16 and John xiii. 35 ; and with his importunate prayers, John xvii. Farther, while I acknowledge that every individual may, for reasons satisfactory to his own mind, withhold ministerial intercourse from this or that particular man, I wish before these lips are sealed in everlasting silence, to ask my Orthodox brethren, (for brethren I will call them, whether they reciprocate the endearing address, or not,) Whether it would not be better to revoke all the restrictive rules, passed in their Associations, or other ecclesiastical bodies, relative to pulpit-exchanges, and leave every individual perfectly free to follow the dic-

tates of his own conscience, and the wishes of his people; subject only to the instructions of his Divine Master.

After this general survey of ecclesiastical transactions and events, into which I have been led by following the chain of causes and consequences, I return for a few minutes to the minister and people of Deerfield. As to myself, I endeavored, and by the grace of God, I hope not without some success, to bear with meekness the discipline to which I was subjected by the neighboring clergy. Never, I think, did "the sun go down upon my wrath." Indeed, with all the combustibles within me, I think no flame was ever enkindled, which deserved the name of wrath. Perhaps the greatest excitement, I ever felt in all the experience of those times, occurred when I first heard that our letters of recommendation would no longer be of any avail in procuring admission to the orthodox churches, when the members of our church changed their residence.—The information was given me in Amherst; and, believing that Dr. Lyman was more responsible for the measure, than any other man. I went some five or six miles out of my way for the purpose of calling on him, and having a serious talk, I did call, but was told that he and Mrs. Lyman had gone to Whately to visit Father Wells and his family. Still bent on my object, I went somewhat farther out of my way in my journey homeward. On arriving at Mr. Wells', I found them at dinner, and being invited to partake with them, I accepted the invitation, and we soon fell into a conversation, in which there was perfect harmony of thought and feeling. On rising from the table, I found the transition from that pleasant conversation, to the seri-

ous talk, I had in view, a difficult matter, especially as I knew the temperament of Dr. Lyman, together with my own so well, as to fear that a collision between us would be very much like that between steel and flint. I therefore concluded to let Dr. Lyman alone, and after sitting as long as courtesy required, I bade them farewell, and returned home, without saying a single word about the very thing, which had carried me so far out of my way.

As a general thing, I lived on terms of courtesy with my clerical opponents through the whole term of my ministerial connection with the people of Deerfield. With Dr. Lyman, especially, I exchanged calls, and at his own house, he always showed himself a gentleman, as well as a Christian. I was likewise connected with my orthodox brethren in the Temperance and Bible Societies; and I think they gave me my full share of the offices and public addresses.

All the members of the two Councils, of which I have spoken, have gone to their final home; and I believe, every member of both those Associations, that passed the original votes of exclusion against me, with only one exception; and it has been a great satisfaction that two of those, who were most opposed, lived to change their feelings so much, as apparently to regard me with Christian confidence; as one, with whom they might take sweet counsel in joy and in sorrow.

The one exception, mentioned above, was a member of Dr. Packard's Association, Rev. Joseph Field, of Charlemont; who, about forty years ago, changed his ground, did penance with me, and now, in almost the full vigor of youth, though in his eighty-sixth year, has come nearly twenty miles to attend this celebration.

With this single exception, I am, and for years, I believe, have been the last survivor of all the opponents, not to say combatants, who fifty years ago entered the ecclesiastical arena in the valley of the Connecticut, though several of them, six or seven, I think, were younger than myself. I draw no vaunting inference from this remarkable providence, connected as it is with the train of facts, mentioned in the former part of this discourse ; but in deep humility and tenderness would say, Peace to the slumbering ashes of the departed ones. Still more would I say, Peace to their immortal spirits, at least from *me*, who must likewise appear before the only competent tribunal, to give an account for the part I have acted in this momentous drama, which may have had, and may yet have, for weal or wo, an influence on “ multitudes, which no man can number.”

Soon after my ordination, those, who had voted against my call, and against the continuance of that call, withdrew from our place of worship, and went to other places ; to Sunderland, Whately, or Conway, as their convenience dictated ; and in doing this, they did not generally travel so far, as they would have done in coming to this village. In the course of a few years, a parish was organized, which many of them had been desiring for twenty or thirty years ; and which was perfectly reasonable, as they generally dwelt from four to six miles from our place of worship ; and this will in a great measure account for the opposition that was made to my settlement, without supposing it to arise simply, if at all, from difference of religious sentiments.

It has already been mentioned that the population north of a line east and west, drawn through the

centre of the town, were almost to a man in favor of my call, and of the continuance of that call, against the decision of the first Council ; and under all the influences, which were exerted upon them, they were with few exceptions steadfast and unmovable through the twenty-two years of my parochial connection with them. Some few, who could about as well go to South Deerfield, as to meet with us, thinking they could be more edified there, turned their steps in that direction ; but the quarter part of those, who were most orthodox in their sentiments, still walked with us in all the ordinances of the Lord, and were among those on whom I most depended for an audience, when the weather was an excuse with many to leave their seats vacant. With them I was intimate in joy and in sorrow, attended many on the bed of death, and had the satisfaction of believing, that my conversations and prayers were a comfort and benefit to them in passing from the visible to the invisible world.

In the twelfth year of my ministry, 1819, I was deprived of my sight to such a degree, as never more to be able either to write, read, or drive a horse ; but I continued to discharge, in my imperfect manner, all the duties of the ministerial office, and that of superintending the schools, for more than ten additional years ; when, without the slightest intimation of any such desire from the people of my charge, I asked and obtained leave to resign that charge. One of my strongest reasons for so doing, was the fear of losing the necessary influence over the young, whom I could no longer recognize when I met them, and therefore could not easily discharge to them the injunction of the Great Shepherd, " Feed my Lambs." Immediately afterwards

I removed with my family, and was absent between six and seven years ; when with the total loss of sight, I returned with the expectation of spending the residue of my life with the people, for whom I had labored twenty-two years ; and of exerting, as a private Christian, all the best influences, of which I was capable, in promoting their temporal and eternal good. During the twenty-one years, which have since elapsed, exciting subjects have come up ; and, in regard to some of them, and particularly the means of promoting Temperance and Freedom, the course I have thought myself bound to pursue, has been regretted, if not censured, by some of my friends ; but if I have an enemy in this village, or this town, if there be one who does not respect and wish me well, man, woman, or child, I cannot name the person. This certainly must be a soothing consideration to one, who, already in his eighty-second year, is so soon to bid them all a final adieu. Yet a little while, and this frail body will be lodged on yonder terrace, which looks down upon the verdant meadows, as heaven does upon the beautiful earth ; and nothing more will be seen or heard, of him, whom you now see and hear, but the mound, or the silent monument. Nay ; that mound, or that monument will speak to the reflecting minds of those, who remember what I am and have been. Would God that my ministry and my private life had been such, that my grave should utter a diviner voice, than, with all my imperfections, it ever can do. Still I hope that, with all those imperfections, no presumptuous sinner, no thoughtless sinner will ever stand by that grave, and feel himself encouraged, by what he remembers of me, to continue in the violation or neglect of any Divine command, relative to God or

man. On the contrary, I hope there will be an atmosphere about that grave, which will contribute to the spiritual health of those, by whom it is visited ; something to inspire that humility, which is the foundation of all Christian virtues ; something to inspire patience and fortitude under the various privations of life ; something to establish an unwavering faith in the rectitude and benevolence of all the dispensations of Providence ; and something to warm the heart with that charity, that universal love, which is said to be “the bond of perfectness.”

Of the amount of good or evil, resulting from my parochial labors no human being is competent to judge, till he has passed into that world, where he will take incomparably larger and deeper views of the links, which bind together the innumerable dispensations of Divine Providence. We may distinguish in individual cases, the good man from the bad man, so far as our duty requires such discrimination ; but it is far more difficult to compare communities, with all their mingled virtues and vices ; and could this be done, it would be utterly impossible to say how much good or evil was to be traced to the lessons from the pulpit, and still more to any speculative doctrines. In the production of moral good, or evil, many influences are generally combined, which are constantly varied by time and place, and circumstances, which “ no man can number.”

It was once said, “ the world lieth in wickedness ;” and how truly may it now be said, doubtless there are sinners in Deerfield, great sinners ! What has made them so, let the Omniscient say ; not the creature of yesterday. I do not believe there is a faithful preacher in New England, whatever his religious speculations, who,

after ten years' service in the cause of Christ, cannot adopt the lamentation of Paul, and say—"many walk, of whom I have often told you, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose glory is their shame, whose God is their appetite, who mind earthly things." Still there is reason to hope in cases apparently most hopeless. The most ungodly man living, may, for aught we know, have the seed of regeneration planted in his heart, which the grace of God will sooner or later cause to spring up, and produce something of a harvest, though neither a hundred, sixty, nor thirty fold.

Some have thought that the seed of some vegetables may lie for years and ages in the depth of the earth without decay, and when brought forth to the combined influence of air, warmth, and moisture, unfold themselves like other things of their kind. It has been said too, that certain animals have been found, so imbedded in earth, stone, or wood, as to prove that they must have been there for centuries; and, when exposed to the air, have recovered their breath and active powers; and we know that some living things lie apparently lifeless through a long winter, and revive in the spring. So it may be with the principle of spiritual life in the heart of man.

Alas! that the ministration of the Gospel should be so slow in producing its proper effect! This, however, should not lead us to doubt for a moment the sufficiency of the Gospel to transform the worst of men into something better than the best; to raise them from the degradation of brutes to the glory of angels. We may plunge so deep into the earth, as to lose all the benefit of the light and heat of the meridian Sun; but that is

no evidence that the sun is not shining. As little is the thoughtless continuance in sin any objection to the intrinsic power of christianity. That the gospel, if universally received into the hearts of men, would put a speedy end to all sin and sorrow, I believe, from deep inspection into the system, with as much assurance, as I believe in the existence of the material world. "I know that my Redeemer liveth." I know that the Redeemer of the world liveth. With the clear eye of faith I see him "stand," in the latter day "upon the earth." I see his glory dissipating all the shades of sin and sorrow, and creating a "new Heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Members of my former Parish, Brethren, Friends, Acquaintances and Strangers, some of whom have come from afar, I thank you for the opportunity, you have now given me, for bearing this testimony of a dying, but immortal man, to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Allow me, while I bid you an affectionate farewell, to remind you, that, in order to hasten the triumphs of the Gospel, we have each and all of us something to do; and, if we cannot agree in our speculations, let us take one another by the hand, and with concentrated steps, throw ourselves into the arms of Jesus; throw ourselves on his bosom; that the pulsations of his heart may melt ours into such a unity, that division will thenceforth be impossible. **AMEN.**

APPENDIX.

BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE.

At a legal meeting of the First Parish in Deerfield, held August 1st, 1857, a committee was chosen to make suitable arrangements for the celebration on the 22d of September, of the fiftieth Anniversary of the Ordination of Rev. Dr. Willard.

In the discharge of this duty, the committee sent invitations to the remaining college classmates of Dr. W., and to several clergymen and others, his associates and friends, to join in the celebration.

The high character of Dr. Willard, the respect and esteem in which he is held by the community at large, drew together on the appointed day a large assembly.

The services in the Church were as follows:—

1. An Introductory Prayer, by Rev. Rufus Ellis of Boston.
2. Hymn.
3. Reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. N. Whitman of Deerfield.
4. Prayer, by Rev. E. S. Gannett, D. D.
5. Ode, (the same sung at the Ordination, fifty years before.)
6. Discourse, by Dr. Willard.
7. Prayer and Benediction, by Dr. Willard.

The Church was tastefully decorated with evergreens and flowers. Before the altar stood a floral cross of pure white and green; with large and beautiful bouquets on each side. The pillars of the gallery were wreathed with green. A green cross hung above and behind the pulpit, and branches of delicately tinted autumn leaves were fixed upon the gallery below the choir.

After the services in the Church, the company proceeded to the Town Hall, where an abundant collation had been provided by the Ladies of the Society. The divine blessing was invoked by Rev. Joseph Field of Charlemont. After the repast, Rev. Mr. Moors, the present Pastor of the Society, and Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, delivered an address of welcome and congratulation, testifying to the high esteem in which his venerable predecessor was held, and to the wise and benign influence which he still exerted over the Parish. The Chairman then called up the following gentlemen, who responded to the call in remarks full of interest and feeling, which added much to the pleasure and profit of the occasion. Hon. James Savage of Boston, a classmate of Dr. Willard, Rev. Rufus Ellis of Boston, Pres't Hitchcock of Amherst College, Rev. Dr. Gannett of Boston, whose eloquent encomium upon the decoration of the Church will long be remembered with pleasure by the young ladies, whose taste and skill it displayed. Hon. Geo. T. Davis of Greenfield, Hon. John Prentiss of Keene, N. H., Justice Willard, Esq., of Springfield, Rev. O. C. Everett of Charlestown, Rev. A. Harding of New Salem.

Many letters were received from gentlemen who could not be present, expressing their interest in the occasion. A portion of these were read by the Chairman, including one from Rev. John Pierpont of Medford, Judge Wells of Chicopee, Rev. John Fessenden of Dedham, Rev. Dr. Sanger of Dover, Hon. Joseph Willard of Boston, James M. Howe, Esq., of Boston, enclosing one hundred dollars, Rev. F. A. Whitney of Brighton, Rev. Dr. Huntington of Cambridge, Rev. Dr. Allen of Northboro, J. N. Knapp Esq., of Walpole, N. H. Hon. Samuel Greele of Boston, Rev. Dr. Wellington of Templeton, Rev. Dr. Crosby of Charlestown, N. H. Rev. Warren Burton of Cambridge, Henry Williams Esq., of Boston. The occasion was a pleasant and happy one, both for the venerable man in whose honor it was conceived and executed, and for the people, who had thus an opportunity to pay their homage of respect to one whom they so reverently esteem.

J. F. M.

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